

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 3, SACRAMENTO AREA OFFICE – MS 15

North Region Environmental Division

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May 10, 2004

John Baker, Fisheries Biologist
NOAA- National Marine Fisheries Service
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 8-300
Sacramento, CA 95814-4708

Project Ref:
File EA # 03-33380

Subject: Initiation of Informal Section 7 Consultation Pursuant to the
Endangered Species Act for the Lincoln Bypass Project in Placer County

Dear Mr. Baker:

The California Department of Transportation (Department), in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is proposing to construct a Bypass around the City of Lincoln in Placer County. The proposed project will consist of constructing a four-lane freeway on a new alignment around (to the west of) the City of Lincoln between R19.6/38.3 (PM 12.2/R23.8). The preferred alignment (D13 North Modified) begins approximately 1.6 km (1.0 mile) south of the City of Lincoln, extends to the west around Lincoln Airport, and rejoins existing Route 65 approximately 0.16 km (0.1 mile) south of Bear River. The total length of the alignment is approximately 20.6 km (12.8 miles).

Thank you for your timely review and constructive comments on our draft Biological Assessment (BA). We have edited our BA to address your comments and as a result it is our determination that this project is not likely to adversely affect Central Valley steelhead (*Onocorhynchus mykiss*). FHWA also agrees with this determination as per our March 10, 2004 meeting with FHWA and NOAA Fisheries.

As FHWA's non-federal representative designated to conduct informal Section 7 consultation, we request your concurrence that this project is not likely to adversely affect CV Steelhead, or adversely modify its Critical Habitat that was vacated by court order on April 30, 2002. It was also determined during our March meeting the project would not adversely affect any Essential Fish Habitat. Please use this informal consultation process to document your concurrence with this determination.

I am enclosing one copy of the final BA for your review. If you need further information, please call Christina Lynch at (916) 274-0558 or e-mail at

John Baker, NMFS
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Christina_lynch@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Chris Collison, Senior Resource Biologist
Caltrans North Region

Enclosure: Biological Assessment

CC: e-mail
Leland Dong, FHWA
Gary Sweeten, FHWA
John Webb, Caltrans D-3
Karen McWilliams, Caltrans D-3
Christina Lynch, Caltrans D-3